

Today's News - Thursday, August 25, 2011

EDITOR'S NOTE: A reminder that we're taking Monday's and Friday's off through Labor Day. We'll be back Tuesday, August 30. Happy Weekend!

- Assessing the damage after the East Coast's strongest earthquake in 67 years: is "this part of the country, with its older architecture and inexperience with seismic activity, prepared for a truly powerful quake?" + Gotham Gazette offers up its in-depth 2008 report "Preparing for the Great New York Earthquake" (and here comes Hurricane Irene!).
- Earthquake ravaged Christchurch unveils its ambitious £1 billion vision of the future
- a low rise, people-friendly "city in a garden." + The city commissions Shigeru Ban to design a cardboard cathedral (it looks pretty amazing).
- Architecture and security: a new U.S. government program "underscores the fact that security and design excellence are not separate matters to be reconciled."
- Jones jams into a few paragraphs about Piano's Shard one of the most vitriolic commentaries we've ever read: "a broken society's towering achievement" and "quite obviously and even gleefully the imposition of a style of architecture that is banal, moneyed, and grimly businesslike" (ouch!).
- Not to be out-done, sparks continue to fly re: the "fossilized thinking" and "shoddy process" (i.e. design/build) resulting in "four mediocre design options for the new Royal Alberta Museum" (ouch, again!).
- On brighter notes: Despite the bad economy, the Toronto Public Library "has quietly been improving the cityscape" and "raising the bar for world-class contemporary architecture and design along the way."
- Lubell cheers O'Herlihy's update of Julius Shulman's 1950 Los Angeles house.
- Gross.Max envisions Berlin's former Tempelhof Airport as "a contemporary prairie for the urban cowboy."
- Boddy offers a most eloquent report from the final edition of Brian MacKay-Lyons' Ghost Lab: an impressive list of attendees and a "generosity of spirit everywhere evident."
- Long sits down with the Olympics head of design: the "Queen of the East is part of a new generation of architects interested not in futuristic shapes and utopian dreams but in the lessons of how our city has developed."
- Hume sits down with Prix de Rome winner Fitzgerald to discuss her take on urban agriculture.
- How Turkey's First "Slow City" is finding ways to keep its traditional ways of agriculture alive.
- Call for entries: YUL-MTL: Moving Landscapes International Ideas Competition for the gateway corridor linking Montreal-Trudeau International Airport to the city's downtown.
- Weekend diversions:
- Safdie gets the Charlie Rose treatment.
- King x 2: AIA San Francisco's Architecture and the City Festival "version 9.0 may be the most thorough yet." + He gives thumbs-up to two new books and an oh-so-green building.
- Bullivant cheers "Living in the Endless City" that is "a powerful convergence of values" with "illustrations are vividly telling."
- We couldn't resist: architectural greats recreated as "knuckle dusters" (i.e. rings for fingers of architects who have everything - now we know what we want for Christmas!).

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[Is East Coast prepared for truly powerful quake? ...after the East Coast's strongest earthquake in 67 years, inspectors assessed the damage and found that most problems were minor. But the shaking raised questions about whether this part of the country, with its older architecture and inexperience with seismic activity, is prepared for a truly powerful quake.](#) - Wall Street Journal

[When the Earth Shakes: Tuesday's quake may have seemed like a freak occurrence, but as we reported in 2008, scientists have warned that a far more damaging earthquake might hit the city some day....Preparing for the Great New York Earthquake](#) - Gotham Gazette (NYC)

[Earthquake ravaged Christchurch unveils low-rise 'city in a garden': ...its vision of the future – a low rise, people-friendly 'city in a garden'...ambitious £1 billion draft plan for rebuilding the heart of New Zealand's second biggest city over the next 20 years...envisages an environmentally conscious city of parks and green open spaces, rooftop gardens, cycle tracks, and a light rail network linking the centre and suburbs.](#) [images]- Telegraph (UK)

[Shigeru Ban designs cardboard cathedral for earthquake-hit Christchurch: The New Zealand city has commissioned the Japanese architect to design a temporary structure on the site of its 1864 cathedral that was destroyed during February's earthquake.](#) [images]- BD/Building Design (UK)

[As we prepare for 10th anniversary of 9-11, architects face new challenges: Security and design operate at cross roads. The architect's role has been relegated to masking the more unpleasant aspects of contemporary life...Design is more than skin-deep...With assistance and input from the American Institute of Architects, the U.S. Department of State Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations is adopting design excellence...underscores the fact that security and design excellence are not separate matters to be reconciled.](#) By Michael Lingerfelt/AIA Florida- TCPalm.com (Florida)

[The Shard is a broken society's towering achievement: London's new skyscraper is a monument to wealth and power run way out of control: The riots were bad enough. But the Shard is shattering. Stabbed into the historic fabric of a city that has never built especially tall...it seems a lunatic attack on London...not an avant-garde revelation of new possibilities...It is quite obviously and even gleefully the imposition of a style of architecture that is banal, moneyed, and grimly businesslike.](#) By Jonathan Jones - Renzo Piano- Guardian (UK)

[Fossilized thinking guides museum design: ...four mediocre design options for the new Royal Alberta Museum is the disappointing outcome of a shoddy process...failed to seek the best architect. Instead, it sought builders, through a design-build model...This is no ordinary building. If we're going to get a new public institution of this stature, let's do it right. We need to hold an international design competition of architects, pick a winner, and then tender the project for construction.](#) By Paula Arab- Calgary Herald (Canada)

[Turning the page on sleek architecture: ...despite being continually pressed by budget cuts, the Toronto Public Library has quietly been improving the cityscape with stylish renovations...making beautiful buildings everyone can enjoy, and raising the bar for world-class contemporary architecture and design along the way. -- Makrimichalos Cugini Architects; Ken Fukushima/Cannon Design; Rounthwaite, Dick and Hadley Architects/Shoalts and Zaback Architects/E.R.A. Architects](#) [images]- Toronto Star

[Shulman 2.0: O'Herlihy updating famed photographer's Los Angeles house...despite the fact that the house is carefully designated, LA's Office of Historic Resources is allowing the architect to add some of his contemporary "voice"...Adding richness where there's tiredness"...](#) By Sam Lubell -- Raphael Soriano; Garret Eckbo (1950); Lorcan O'Herlihy Architects; Mia Lehrer [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

Repurposing Tempelhof: The former Tempelhof Airport in Berlin is being redeveloped as a modern public park 100 acres larger than Central Park...with its many layers of history, can be seen as a metaphor for contemporary Berlin—a vast laboratory for cultural production and modern urban planning, largely built on the debris of European culture...proposal calls for "a contemporary prairie for the urban cowboy...It's about reutilizing old land and making it do something new"... -- Eelco Hooftman/Gross.Max-Wall Street Journal

Giving up the Ghost: ...the final edition of Ghost Lab, a series of successful research laboratories held on the Nova Scotia farm of Brian MacKay-Lyons since 1994. A select group of like-minded architects, historians and critics commiserated over the values of regionalism, craft and design...generosity of spirit everywhere evident... By Trevor Boddy -- Kenneth Frampton; Juhani Pallasmaa; Tom Fisher; Peter Buchanan; Glenn Murcutt; Marlon Blackwell; Tom Kundig; Rick Joy; Wendell Burnette; Dan Rockhill; Deborah Berke; Brigitte Shim; Patricia Patkau; etc. [images] - Canadian Architect

Queen of the East: Olympics head of design shares her vision: Eleanor Fawcett is working with boroughs to make full use of the Olympic Park to create new neighbourhoods in keeping with older ones nearby...[she] is part of a new generation of architects interested not in futuristic shapes and utopian dreams but in the lessons of how our city has developed. By Kieran Long- Evening Standard (UK)

Architecture and the edible city: Halifax architect Susan Fitzgerald plans to use the \$50,000 Prix de Rome to study urban agriculture..."It's not just putting in allotments for people. 'm interested in how we could have a different kind of relationship with a park or a building that sets up a new dynamic." By Christopher Hume -- Fowler Bauld & Mitchell; Brian Mackay Lyons - Toronto Star

Turkey's First "Slow City" Promotes Local Agriculture, Slow Food Movement: Seferihisar...is part of Cittaslow, an international movement founded to promote the Slow Food movement around the world...Since becoming a "slow city" several years ago, farmers are finding ways to keep their traditional ways of agriculture alive.- Green Prophet (Middle East)

Call for entries: YUL-MTL: Moving Landscapes International Ideas Competition for the gateway corridor linking Montreal-Trudeau International Airport (YUL) to its downtown area (MTL) along Autoroute 20; cash prizes; registration deadline: August 26- City of Montreal / Ville de Montréal / Chair in Landscape and Environmental Design at University of Montreal (CPEUM)

Moshe Safdie sits down with Charlie Rose [video]- PBS / Charlie Rose

S.F. architectural fest to include candidate forum: San Franciscans this month will have the chance to hear their leading mayoral candidates tackle an always-volatile topic in this town: the built environment...Aug. 29 forum doubles as the opening event in the AIA San Francisco Chapter's Architecture and the City Festival, and version 9.0 may be the most thorough yet...theme "Architecture of Consequence" By John King- San Francisco Chronicle

Going bust - white marble busts - on Market Street: ...Allan Jacobs' new book "The Good City: Reflections and Imagination"...mixes professional war stories with planning theory and a survey of today's San Francisco, but the highlight for me is the whimsical conception of what our diagonal main drag could be...The South of Market skyline also takes a beating in "The Big One: A Story of San Francisco," David Littlejohn's evocatively lush novel...the Multi-Use Building at City College of San Francisco...includes everything from a geothermal plant in the basement to a living roof on top. By John King -- Pfau Long Architecture/VBN Architects - San Francisco Chronicle

"Living in the Endless City: The Urban Age Project by the London School of Economics and Deutsche Bank's Alfred Herrhausen Society" edited by Ricky Burdett and Deyan Sudjic: The companion book to 2008's The Endless City collects essays and analysis on the cities of Istanbul, Mumbai, and São Paulo...The quality of the writing is consistently high, with a powerful convergence of values but little duplication of ideas across the texts, and the illustrations are vividly telling. By Lucy Bullivant -- Philipp Rode; Saskia Sassen; Gerald Frug; David Satterthwaite; Alejandro Aravena/Elemental/ Alejandro Zaera-Polo; Richard Sennett; Omer Kanipak- Domus

For the architect who has everything...Architectural greats recreated as knuckle dusters: Foster + Partners' Gherkin and Big Ben in London, St Basil's Cathedral in Moscow, Chateau Lafite in France and the Taj Mahal in India are among the buildings that are immortalised in precious metals for the collection, known as the Architecture Rings. [images] - BD/Building Design (UK)

Book Review: "One Million Acres & No Zoning": Lars Lerup's Outrageous Encomium to Houston Instructs and Infuriates: This isn't some dryly academic reconfiguration of trendy urban planning theory. I recommend it for the intrepid. By Norman Weinstein - ArchNewsNow



Exhibition: Ai Weiwei: Circle of Animals/Zodiac Heads, LACMA, Los Angeles

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